



# ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

Dudley, Mass.

MARCH 20, 1853.







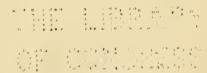
## ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED AT DUDLEY, MASSACHUSETTS,

MARCH 20, 1853.

WITH TOPOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTICES OF THE TOWN.

BY JOSHUA BATES, D. D.



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### DISCOURSE.

#### 1 SAMUEL vii. 12.

THEN SAMUEL TOOK A STONE AND SET IT BETWEEN MIZPEH AND SHEN;
AND CALLED THE NAME OF IT EBENEZER, SAVING: HITHERTO HATH
THE LORD HELPED US.

It was to Samuel an occasion of great interest, when he performed this significant act, and uttered this language of pious gratitude. The Philistines, in the time of Eli, his predecessor in office, had defeated the armies of Israel; and taken and carried away the ark of the covenant. But by the miraculous interposition of Heaven, the Philistines were led to fear the ark, and cause it to be sent back to the borders of the land of Israel; and subsequently to flee before the men of Israel, who pursued and smote them, until they came to Bethcar. Thus the way was prepared for the restoration of the ark, that symbol of the divine presence and favor, to its appointed place, in Shiloh. This success and these bright prospects, in the view of pious Samuel, demanded a grateful acknowedgment to Him who had thus blessed him and his people, in their contest with "the uncircumcised Philistines," and so far restored to the repenting children of Israel this token of his favor and their wonted religious privileges, with the hope of seeing still better days. Accordingly, he "took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen; and called the name of it Ebenezer, [a stone of help,] saying: Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

This example of devout and thankful acknowledgment of the goodness of God, is worthy of imitation by all, who can look back and recollect seasons of divine interposition in their favor, and call to mind blessings bestowed upon them; whether in their individual capacity, or in any of the various relations of life which they sustain. I have thought, therefore, that the text would form a suitable introduction to a discourse on the present occasion; and might lead both you and me, my brethren, to some interesting recollections and meditations; might call into exercise some pure emotions of gratitude to our Heavenly Father, and induce us to form new resolutions of obedience and devotion to his service. For this is the nearest Sabbath to the tenth anniversary of my installation and induction into the office of pastor and teacher of the Congregational Church and Society in this place.

So far as it regards myself, I might indeed go further back, in my recollections and acknowledgments. For within a week of this day, no less than four anniversaries, of great interest to me, are clustered together—my birth-day, the day of my

first public consecration to the work of the gospel ministry, the time of my formal introduction into the office of a teacher in one of the schools of the prophets, and finally, my consecrated connection with you, as pastor and teacher of this church.

This is my birth-day; and if any one should address me in the language of Pharaoh to Jacob, and ask, "How old art thou?" I should not answer in the complaining language of that much afflicted and greatly tried patriarch: "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been; and have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage." No! for I could not thus answer with truth. But I should rather say: 'Many and good have the days of the years of my life been; and I have fully attained to the days of the years of my fathers in their pilgrimage.' For I am this day threescore and seventeen years old-seven years beyond the common age even of those who live out all their days-having been born at Cohasset, on the 20th day of March, 1776, three months and a half before the birth of our country—before the declaration of the independence of the United States of America.

This day, likewise, is near to the anniversary of my ordination; for on the 16th day of March, 1803, fifty years ago last Wednesday, I was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, and constituted pastor of the "First Congregational Church in Dedham." There I continued fifteen years, labor-

ing with great satisfaction, and not without apparent success, among a people whom I loved, and by whom I was treated with kindness and respect;—from whom, therefore, I was reluctantly separated; but in obedience to a call of Providence, and under an ecclesiastical sanction which I could not disregard.

Another anniversary, to which I have likewise alluded, occurred on Friday last. For on the 18th day of March, 1818, thirty-five years ago, my inauguration, as the presiding officer of Middlebury College, took place. In that position I remained more than twenty-one years; laboring substantially in the same cause, to which I had been previously devoted; preaching and teaching, in the pulpit and in the lecture-room; assisting, as I was able, in the training of many precious young men, for the service of the church, of their country and the world; and securing, at the same time, to a large and beloved family of my own, as I hope and believe, a sound and liberal education, for the benefit of their generation.

The fourth and last-named anniversary in the cluster, will occur on Tuesday next. For on the 22d day of March, 1843, ten years ago, at the age of sixty-seven, forty years from the time of my ordination and first settlement in Dedham, I was installed as pastor of this church, and charged anew to preach the everlasting gospel with all patience and long-suffering. Such an instance of late re-settlement in the ministry is not to be found, I believe, in the

ecclesiastical history of New England. But it took place in accordance with my earnest desire. For when I took a dismission from Dedham, it was with a full purpose, if permitted, to leave the business of college instruction, in season for re-settlement in the ministry, that I might spend my last days altogether in the work to which I had been devoted. with the hope of finishing my course with joy, "close to the altar of God." In this desire I have been so far gratified. For here I have been laboring for these ten years—too languidly I confess, and with many obstacles to encounter-yet with a good degree of satisfaction; and, I hope, with some benefit to the church and to the cause of truth and righteousness. But, at present, I will proceed no further in speaking of myself exclusively. For the naming of this fourth anniversary brings before me scenes, and revives recollections, equally interesting, my brethren, to you and to me. the consideration of these reminiscences, let me ask your candid attention; while, with truth and simplicity, I briefly recount what I recollect, calculated to call forth our grateful acknowledgments of the goodness of God toward us; and induce us, with united hearts and hands, to set up a memorial to his praise. For, in the review, I am confident we shall find occasion to say: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

When I came here, ten years ago, I found a regularly organized Congregational church\* of about

<sup>\*</sup> See Appendix, Note A.

one hundred members, and a small society loosely connected with it; surrounded, or rather intermingled with the members of two other societies, Methodist and Universalist; in the midst of a population, within the limits of the township, of 1,300 or 1,400, including a few persons who attended public worship in other towns, and many who attended nowhere, and considered themselves as belonging to no religious association. The proportion of these several classes of the inhabitants of Dudley, I could not ascertain with sufficient accuracy, to justify me in making a numerical statement. The latter class, however-the non-attendantsseemed to be much the largest. Of course, the number of stated attendants in this house was small, and that of the constant attendants much smaller. Though a few seemed to be truly devoted to God and his service, loving Zion and mourning over her desolations; yet a general spirit of languor and discouragement seemed to me to have pervaded the community, and even to have crept into the church. Indeed, it was evident, that this spirit had been long spreading itself abroad, and weakening the bonds of this religious society. The fact that they had suffered this house to be sold, to pay the salary of a former minister, and thus become the property of individual proprietors,\* with that other fact, that their legal organization had been lost, so that as a society they had become incapable of holding prop-

<sup>\*</sup> See Note B.

erty, or of securing the fulfillment of joint obligations, proves conclusively, that this despondency had nearly reached a fatal crisis. There was such a want of mutual attachment and union of effort, as raised in my mind a doubt whether it were possible to awaken a spirit of harmony, and restore mutual confidence among the scattered members of the former Congregational society; whether, therefore, I ought to cast in my lot among you, and attempt to help those who were disposed to help one another, in resisting the downward tendency of social and religious order; and thus to raise the hopes and combine the energies of the friends of God and his church, and of all who love the cause of truth and order and salvation. But believing that I had been sent here for a special purpose, I came to the conclusion that it was my duty to accept the call of the church, and take up my abode with you. Nor have I ever regretted the decision. For I have been among you without fear; and I cannot but hope that good has been done, and that the final result will be blessed to me and to you and to many who are to come after us. It does not become me to boast, nor will I boast of anything done by me alone; for by the grace of God I am what I am, and have done what I have done. To Him, therefore, belongs all the glory. Indeed, I have more occasion to humble myself than to boast; to mourn over my mistakes and deficiency of action, rather than to claim merit, and speak of energy and success. But something, I may say without

boasting, has been done by the various instrumentalities which have been put in requisition, to give stability to social order, and promote the cause of truth and salvation.

The first thing done for this purpose, was to obtain an Act of the General Court of Massachusetts, legalizing the records of the society; and thus enabling the members to organize themselves anew, under a voluntary constitution; so as to hold property and act efficiently as a corporation, agreeably to the laws and constitution of the Commonwealth. The second step in these preparatory efforts of consolidation and union, was to procure the relinquishment of the personal rights of property in this house of worship, by a regular transfer of the property, held by individuals, to the newly organized society.

Without these preparatory steps, there could have been but little hope of giving stability to a Congregational society in this place; or of laying a foundation for united and continued efforts to secure the regular and faithful preaching of the gospel. You might, indeed, have had occasional preaching by men of all descriptions, coming and going as the wind blows and the tide ebbs and flows. But very little benefit can result from such a floating ministry. It is calculated rather to pull down than to build up the best institutions of society—institutions promotive of peace and harmony—of truth, love and salvation. A ministry, to be permanently useful and effective, must itself be permanent—must be con-

nected with a well organized church and a stable society—must thus have something to stand upon and feel secure. But however important these incipient movements, as preparatory to united and efficient action, they would have been in vain without the direct means of religious instruction and the instrumentalities of religious improvement, to which they are subservient, if not indispensably necessary.

What these means and instrumentalities are, so far as they have been used here, for these ten years, I will now endeavor briefly to state. Among them, that of preaching the gospel I have viewed as first in point of order and importance; and this instrumentality I have endeavored to use faithfully, according to the measure of talents and grace given me. How I have succeeded, it becomes not me to say; but I may say without impropriety, I have preached much, and as well as I could.\* I have tried to learn the truth and preach the whole gospel, as it was laid open to my mind; keeping nothing back which I found clearly revealed and evidently stated in the Bible. I have sometimes preached in course, following the natural order of connected subjects, or the order of the inspired records; and sometimes I have selected my texts and chosen my themes of discourse, with reference to the changing circumstances of time and place; adapting my remarks to the occasions which called

<sup>\*</sup> See Note C.

them forth; and thus have I endeavored so to divide the word of God as to give to every man a portion in due season; and, as far as possible, to commend myself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. I have earnestly desired to preach the gospel, the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel. When I came among you, I came with the full determination "to know," or rather to make known "nothing among you but Christ Jesus and him crucified." How far I have adhered to that resolution, judge ye. Say ye, who have been my constant, candid hearers, whether I have ever indulged myself in political preaching, in speculative preaching, or even in controversial preaching? My desire certainly has been, to "preach the word," the simple word of God, and in the plain, direct and simple manner which that word prescribes-" speaking the truth in love."

Of the ability with which I have preached, or of the success of my preaching, I dare not speak—I cannot speak. I only know that so far as it has corresponded with the teachings of Christ and his Apostles, it will prove "a savor of life unto life," to them that have heard and believed; but of "death unto death to them that perish," whether they have heard or refused to hear. Indeed, I expect not to learn the full result of my ministry here, and elsewhere, till it shall be revealed in the judgment day, and seen in all its consequences, direct and indirect, immediate and remote, through the coming ages of eternity. The motives of action and the fidelity of

execution are all that belong to me. Of these I need not speak; of these I need not even think, except in my closet, before a heart-searching and a sin-pardoning God!

The next instrumentality in order, which I name, and which is indeed the next in point of importance, is our Sabbath school. This has been maintained, summer and winter, during the whole period of my ministry here, under the same approved superintendent; and has been a very efficient means of interesting children and youth in the study of the Bible, and of leading adults and even experienced Christians to an intimate acquaintance with the word of God; and thus of preparing them to meet the objections of unbelievers and errorists; to judge of the soundness of the preaching which they hear; and to receive with meekness, embrace with readiness, and hold with firmness, the truth as it is in Jesus. Hence, in the promotion of the cause of truth and pure religion among us, I have considered our Sabbath school as second to no instrumentality but the preaching of the gospel.

Our monthly church conferences and weekly prayer meetings have, likewise, been important auxiliaries in the system of means adopted and used among us;—not so efficient, however, as they might have been, and as they would have been, if the whole church could have been persuaded, as far as practicable, to attend the former constantly, in a right spirit; and if all the members of the congregation would have attended the appointed prayer

meetings as constantly as they could, consistently with health, distance, and special and imperative calls of duty. But we are a scattered people, many living remote from the place of meeting; and perhaps I have expected too much from this instrumentality of good. I do hope, however, that whoever shall come after me, will receive more aid and encouragement in his labors from the prayer meeting; and find his hands held up more steadily by Aaron and Hur-by the prayers of the church. For I am persuaded that the efficacy of preaching in any place depends very much on prayer, to obtain the aid and agency of the Holy Spirit. No man, however devoted to his work, can indeed preach in the power and demonstration of the Spirit, without this co-operation of the church-without that united, fervent prayer of faith which lays hold of the promises, and brings down the influences of the Holy Spirit to give efficacy to the word preached. Yes, Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase; and he giveth it in answer to prayer.

I may therefore name, as a distinct instrumentality of spiritual good among us, a small female prayer meeting, usually held and perseveringly maintained once in two weeks. This too, I doubt not, has been the means of obtaining spiritual blessings; and I have most sincerely wished that greater numbers of our devout women, old and young, were so situated as to be able to meet occasionally for prayer and conversation on the interests of the Redeemer's

kingdom, without being under the restraints necessarily imposed on mixed assemblies. Such confidential, unembarrassed meetings of pious females, are among the best means of their growth in grace, and the best preparatives for exerting an extended Christian influence. A minister of much experience in pastoral labors and great spiritual discernment, once said to me, that he considered the female prayer meeting, in a certain village of which we were speaking, as the thermometer of the religious state of that community. He added, when the female prayer meeting prospers there, religion in the church and in that community prospers likewise; and when that declines, this also languishes; and many fall away from the faith, and from the faithful and earnest use of the means of grace.

Another instrumentality of good used among us, likewise under female influence, I must not omit to name—a benevolent sewing circle—a society of female friends, who meet together and labor together for a few hours, once in two weeks, for the purpose of doing something for the support of missions and the spread of the gospel, especially in the waste places and new settlements of our own country. And although a portion of their funds has sometimes been devoted to other uses, much has been done by the association for this purpose. But the incidental and collateral benefits of its meetings have been scarcely less obvious than the direct effects and declared purpose of the associa-

tion. These meetings have served to promote kind social feelings; to bring together and hold together, in love, many who would otherwise have remained strangers to each other. The religious influence of the meetings has, as far as I could see, been in all respects favorable. For though they have been eminently social, affording opportunity for free and cheerful conversation, yet the whole intercourse has been rendered conservative and promotive of good feelings and religious improvement, by the reading of the Bible and missionary journals, and more especially by the closing devotional exercises. myself, I have always been disposed to encourage this social and benevolent association; because I have viewed it as useful and promotive of social enjoyment and Christian friendship. I have considered it, indeed, one of the strongest bonds and most efficient preservatives of the Congregational Society in Dudley.

Still another instrumentality for religious improvement among us, I ought not to pass over in silence, because without it public worship in this house could scarcely have been maintained. I refer, in this remark, to our associated singing choir. To them, and especially to their chorister, for the time and labor employed in preparation for the important service assigned them in the sanctuary, the church and congregation are under great obligation. For, though our choir is small, it is efficient and well instructed; and the style of their singing is, in my judgment, sufficiently elevated for the solemn exer-

cises of public worship, and well calculated to produce the best effects of church music.

I name but one more instrumentality of religious improvement, which has been successfully used among us; and that is, our stated and systematic contributions for missionary and other benevolent purposes. This might, indeed, be considered as one of the fruits of grace rather than a means of grace. But truly it is both—both means and end both cause and effect; for while it proceeds from a benevolent spirit, it serves to cherish benevolent feelings and strengtheus benevolent principle. Indeed, the Scripture adage, "He that watereth shall be watered also himself," is applicable not only to individuals, but to societies; so that it has become a common remark, founded on common observation, that a liberal missionary church will be a prosperous and growing church; but that one which possesses no diffusive spirit, and confines all its charities and labors to itself, has no vitality in it, and must, therefore, sooner or later languish and die. Trulyaccording to the economy of heavenly origin-truly, "there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." And all this is true of individual man and of men associated together. I pity the man to whom God hath given riches, and withal no heart to enjoy them, or to render them subservient to purposes of benevolence. I pity, too, the church or society whose charity begins and ends at homewhere no diffusive spirit of love dwells-where all

the love professed or seen, is a love of self—where nothing is done to send the gospel to the heathen, and no compassion felt for a world lying in wickedness and perishing for lack of vision. "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united."

As a church and society, compared with some others, we have indeed done but little in the work of benevolence. But we have done something; and this has evidently redounded, not only to the glory of God, but to our spiritual good—to the growth of grace in us, and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom among us. During the ten years of my ministry here, there has been contributed

To the	American Board of Com. for H	oreign	Missi	ons,	\$889	98
46	Am. Home Miss. So. (including	ga lega	cy of §	5500)	1,071	35
66	American Tract Society, .				173	45
66	American Bible Society,				74	55
66	Several other Benevolent Societ	eties,			350	47
	Amounting to the sum of			. \$	2,559	80

And this is exclusive of what may have been contributed by individuals, without my agency, to some of the benevolent institutions, and to promote some of the benevolent operations of the day. To God be all the glory, but to us the reward of grace, in the fulfillment of his gracious promise to them that give cheerfully; for "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Thus have I briefly enumerated and described such of the instrumentalities of good, employed

among us and by us, as occurred to my mind. How much, for good, has been accomplished by each of them-how much in establishing Christian principle, in cherishing Christian hope and forming Christian character, I will not attempt to decide. Indeed we cannot see and fully comprehend the individual effects, nor even the combined results, of these several agencies, till they are brought out at the judgment of the great day and viewed in the light of eternity. But their general tendency we may see even here; and some of the more obvious effects, produced by their combined influence, I will endeavor to state with caution and candor, while I name some of the changes among us which I have observed, and speak of the present condition and future prospects of this church and society.

During the period of my ministry here, seventy-four persons have been admitted to the fellowship of the church, principally by profession; and during the same period forty-eight members have died or been dismissed, leaving an increase of twenty-six. Though there has been no season of revival among us, in the technical sense of that term, yet there have been occasional appearances of increased attention to religion, and two marked periods, as evident "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;"—one of them bringing into the church, on the same Sabbath, sixteen members; and the other, on two Sabbaths, fourteen. To this statement I may add, that there has been a gradual increase of attention to the use of the appointed means of grace,

with less desecration, and an improved observance of the Lord's day; and withal a growing attachment, union and mutual confidence among the members of the church and society. So that, with a few exceptions, we may be said to be a united people; and notwithstanding a prevailing coldness and lamentable inactivity and want of zeal in many, it should be gratefully acknowledged that the church was never in a better state of communion and fellowship; and the church and society never in a better condition to act together in harmony. This consideration, together with the financial state of the society, which was never better, fully reconciles me to the thought which the occasion naturally suggests, that, as a people, you must soon be called to seek another pastor and teacher, or become as sheep without a shepherd.

My age, and the loud warning given me during the last summer, of my approaching earthly end, compel me to make this announcement; and I make it to-day with great satisfaction, in view of your united condition as a religious society, and of the bright prospect of your being able, in due time, to procure for me a colleague, or successor, who will be a pastor after God's own heart, to come in and go out before you—to lead you into green pastures and by still waters—to feed the sheep and lambs of the flock—to win souls unto Christ, and gather into his church the elect of God. How soon you may be called to act on this subject, or how soon you may think it wise to take the first steps

and adopt the incipient measures in this business, it becomes not me to say; nor do I feel prepared to give any definite advice. But at the approaching annual meeting of the society, I intend to throw the question fully open before you, and leave it, under God, to your wise and deliberate decision.\* It is not my intention, however, to urge the consideration of the subject upon you prematurely; nor do I intend to shrink from duty, or refuse to labor in the vineyard of the Lord, while I have any strength of body or mind for the holy and delightful service. But I shall not, and "I would not live alway;" nor am I willing to stand in the way of a more efficient laborer, or become a clog to the chariot wheels of the gospel among you. I had rather step out of the way, or stand aside for a little while, to behold the work of a fresh laborer, and see the salvation of God before I die.

But whether I may be able to preach for a longer or a shorter period, or whether you may think it wise, or not, to begin immediately to look for another pastor and teacher, I embrace this opportunity—possibly the only one which may be granted me—of addressing you, as if this were my farewell discourse, my last salutation, with my last counsel and advice.

But before I do this, permit me again to say a few words concerning myself; and if what I shall say should seem to you to savor too much of egotism,

<sup>\*</sup> See Note D.

or even of glorying, you will, I trust, bear with me; provided that I glory only in the cross of Christ, in the grace of God. I have lived a great while in the world, and have never been inactive. I have said much and done much. But whether what I have said and done be accounted, in man's judgment, good or evil, is to me of little moment, if God forgives the evil and approves the good, and I be found justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Of one thing I am sure, that I have desired to learn and do the will of God-to ascertain what is true, and to speak the truth as it is in Jesus;—to preach his gospel faithfully, as it lies spread out in the Bible; and to do what I could to promote the glory of God in the salvation of men.

Yes, and of another thing I feel equally sure; and that is, that I have been greatly blessed by my Heavenly Father, through the whole course of a long life and protracted ministry; blessed with an unusual measure of health, and a firm and even vigorous constitution; blessed with strong powers for action and keen susceptibilities for enjoyment. All along I have indeed had trials and occasional disappointments and afflictions; but I have had grace given me to meet and bear them, and have always found them working together for good—"mercies in disguise." I was blessed in childhood, having pious parents, who early devoted me to their covenant God in baptism; who gave me early religious instruction, and with faithful, and yet tender care

and authority, watched over me, and restrained me from open vice and immorality; and who endeavored, by precept and example, to fulfill their covenant engagements, and "train me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." I was blessed in my youth by having opportunity furnished me to obtain a liberal education, and thus to become qualified, in some humble measure, by the grace of God, for the desired and glorious work of the ministry. I have been blessed, greatly blessed, through the whole course of life in my domestic relations. I have been blessed, not indeed with wealth and abundance of this world's goods, but with a "competency vital to content"-with everything needful for food and raiment, sufficient to preserve me from the cares and distractions and temptations of riches on the one hand, and extreme poverty on the other. I have been blessed, especially and above all, by the renewing and sanctifying grace of God-with early grace and continued gracegrace sufficient for me-sufficient to lead me to an early consecration of myself to his service, and a timely consecration to his service in the ministry, and sufficient to render me happy in that service, and enable me to look forward with hope to a blessed and glorious immortality. Yes, and I can say, and I desire to say it, with gratitude to Him from whom all blessings flow,-I can say, to-day, this happiness in the service of my God and Saviour, is not diminished, and this hope remains unshaken as ever, and even brighter and firmer than ever. Yes, with the exception of a single phrase,

in which the apostle Paul speaks of his warfare, as a faithful soldier of the cross, I can adopt the language of that aged Apostle and say, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; -I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also, that love his appearing." Yes, without omission or reserve, but with a humble sense of dependence on divine grace, I can adopt that other strong language of assured hope, uttered by the same Apostle, and say, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Surely, therefore, I may with propriety here set up a monumental stone, and inscribe upon it, EBEN-EZER; for hitherto hath the Lord helped me: Blessed be his name!

In closing this discourse, I have a few words of exhortation and counsel to address to the church and society, collectively and individually; but before I do this, I must request the choir to sing the following

#### MOTETT.

"Go not far from me, O God;
Cast me not away in time of age;
Forsake me not when my strength faileth.
O let my mouth be filled with thy praise,
That I may sing of thy glory, all the day long."

And now, in closing my remarks, I do not forget, nor would I fail to acknowledge with gratitude, that I have generally been treated with kindness, by the members of this church and society—by you all, my brethren and friends, during the whole time of my pilgrimage among you. In this respect, I think, I have been distinguished among my brethren in the ministry. For although all, who are faithful in the service of Christ, are called to labor and endure hardness, and even taught to expect, that they shall suffer more or less of persecution for his sake; yet, in my case, the labor has been sweet, and the endurance comparatively light, and the suffering of reproach not very great, either from scoffers or unbelievers. If, however, in any case unkind words have been spoken to me, or reproachful language used concerning me, let it all be forgotten; for, I am sure, by me it is all forgiven. On the other hand, if I have uttered language of censure and severity, to any man, or against any man, further than truth and frankness and charity even demanded, I sincerely lament it, and hope to be forgiven by Him who looketh on the heart, and to whom a contrite spirit is always an acceptable sacrifice.

And now, my brethren and friends, by way of application, let me exhort you to take courage, and continue steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine, and united in your efforts to maintain the ordinances of Heaven, and the preaching of the gospel among you. For your own sake, for your children's sake, and for the sake of the generations which are to

follow, make provision for the continued, stated preaching of the gospel of Christ; though it should require strenuous effort and even some sacrifice, fail not, I beseech you, to make the requisite provision for securing and maintaining an able and faithful minister of the New Testament. None other, I am persuaded, will meet your demand, or supply your wants. You can never be satisfied with mere hortatory preaching. You cannot live on milk alone. No, you must have the strong meat of the gospel, properly dressed and decently served up, or you will hunger and famish and die. You must have, for your minister, a scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven-a man whose mind is thoroughly disciplined by education and well furnished with Biblical and general knowledge. And you must so provide for his support, that he may be able to pursue his studies without distracting cares, and to give himself wholly to his appropriate work. And this, I am persuaded, you can do and will do; provided you resolve, one and all, to put your hands to the work, to which you are called as a church, and for which you are associated as an ecclesiastical society.

It is true, there are many things here calculated to discourage the faint-hearted; but they may all be overcome by resolution and united effort, under a firm reliance on the promised blessing of Him, who said to his primitive church, and still says to every collection of true believers, "Fear not, little flock; for it is the Father's good pleasure, to give you the

kingdom." It is true, many of your enterprising young men, as they come into active life, remove from you in pursuit of business, and settle in some place more inviting and congenial to their taste or fancy. But the same thing is true of almost every agricultural community in New England. Those who remain, therefore, must be encouraged to come forward and fill the places of their fathers, as then descend to the grave. It is true, likewise, in these times of change and easy removal from one place to another, some substantial inhabitants and good Christians occasionally go out from you. But others come to occupy their places; -perhaps, in some cases, not so good, and in others, even better. Should these changes, therefore, as they have sometimes been allowed to do, discourage you? Everywhere they are taking place, and must be expected. You must willingly give up those that go, and cheerfully and kindly receive those that come-must receive them "for better or for worse," and in all cases make the most of them that you can. Recently you have gained by these exchanges, and I doubt not that you will gain more and more; for the tide of healthful emigration has evidently turned, and, by and by, under the blessing of Heaven on the persevering labors of an able and faithful pastor, aided by the prayers and united efforts of the brethren, its influence will be seen in its bearings on your strength and courage.

You cannot, indeed, at least during the present generation, expect much acquisition of strength from

other denominations of associated Christians. Nor should you attempt to make mere proselytes in name, in opinion, or profession even. Proselytism is a miserable business. It finds no place among enlightened and well-instructed Christians. It is inconsistent with the very genius of Congregationalism, which allows no restraint to be laid upon liberty of inquiry or liberty of conscience—nor permits the interference of any assumed, uninvited, ecclesiastical power. Each Congregational church and society is independent, asking advice when it pleases, and following it when it chooses; adopting its own constitution, making its own by-laws, and standing upon its own platform, built "according to the pattern shown in the mount," as modified and described by the Great Head of the church. Thus leaving every man free to choose his own religion, it wisely forbids everything like proselytism. Do not attempt, therefore, to make proselytes, nor encourage your pastor to do it.\* But may you and he attempt only to win souls unto Christ. And for this labor there is room enough among you. The missionary field around you and in the midst of you is large, and already white unto the harvest. Go out, therefore, with your pastor, into the highways and hedgesgo with him as he goes among those who now deseerate the Sabbath, neglecting the house of God and the means of grace and salvation; and strive to bring them under the sound of the gospel, and pray, while

<sup>\*</sup> See Note E.

he preaches, that the gospel may take effect in their hearts, and redeem them from the power and condemnation of sin.\* Thus will you strengthen your church and society on earth; thus will you bring a revenue of glory to God; and thus will you give joy to the angels and glorified spirits in heaven.†

But however this may be, and whatever may become of the multitudes among you and around you, who now forsake the assembling of themselves together for public worship, and neglect all the appointed means of grace; you may rest assured, if you do your duty and unitedly strive to promote the cause of truth and advance the Redeemer's kingdom, that you will be blessed. Yes, the blessing will come upon you and your future pastor, which was expected by a prophet of olden time, when he said, "Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious!" Strive, therefore, my brethren, to cultivate and maintain a spirit of union and peace, that you may act together, and be strong for the work assigned you. Let the cords of love be drawn closer and closer, and strive together for the faith, for the piety, for the brotherly love, which the gospel enjoins. Above all, take heed that you do not discourage one another, but let every one say to his neighbor, "Come, let us go up to the mountains and bring wood, and build the house of the Lord, that he may be glorified."

But, while I thus address you collectively, as a

<sup>\*</sup> See Note F.

society, I remember that men are not to be judged in masses, but as individuals; and that each one will be called to give account of himself to God. I must, therefore, add a word of exhortation to you as individuals, as accountable beings, hastening to "the judgment of the great day."

My aged friends, with you I fully sympathize, in the immediate expectation of that day. The Judge standeth at the door; death is at hand, and after death cometh the judgment. Most of you, I trust, are prepared for the summons, and waiting patiently till your change come. But O, if any are yet unprepared, and have no good hope through grace, let them no longer delay—let mercy, even at the eleventh hour, be sought, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and repentence toward God. "Seize the kind promise while it waits, nor lose the blessing by delay."

My friends of middle age, in active life, with you, too, I heartily sympathize. Having with you and even before you, borne the heat and burden of the day, I know something of the cares and labors and trials of life, which now press upon you. Yes, and I know, that by the grace of God they can be borne. O, be not surfeited by these cares, nor overcome by these trials and temptations. Live above the world, while you are in it. Use the world as not abusing it. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; and verily thou shalt be fed." If you have found and obtained "the pearl of great price," be therewith content; if you have not, seek with all diligence till you find

it; and then go and sell all that you have and buy it. Thus, and thus only, will you be happy in living for the glory of God and the good of your fellowmen—happy through life, and blessed forever.

My young friends, with you I have not vet lost all sympathy. For I was once young; and I remember the vanities and temptations of youth. I remember, too, the joys of youth—joys promised to all, who early seek the Lord. Some of you, I trust, have done this-have chosen that good part which can never be taken from you-have found the peace and blessedness of believing and obeying the gospel. O, that I could hope that this were the case with you all! O, that I could hope even, that it would be the case with you all! O, that I could, before I die, see you all earnestly inquiring what you must do to be saved, and behold you all pressing into the kingdom of heaven, and rejoicing in the salvation of God! My young friends, once more I beseech you to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and once more, I repeat the gracious promise, that all things requisite for happiness shall be added. So may you glorify God while you live, and best answer the great end of living; and so may you, sooner or later, die in peace, and be forever with the Lord!

Finally, my hearers, let us all prepare to meet our God. You heard what I said concerning my own hope, and perhaps some of you thought the language too strong. I know that there is such a thing as the false hope of the hypocrite; I know, too, that

there is such a thing as the presumptuous hope of the unbeliever; and I know that they will both be cut off, like the spider's web, and perish together. But still I hope; for I know, also, that there is a hope for believers, which purifieth and entereth into that within the vail-which endureth, and will prove an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. I know, moreover, that those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ with all the heart, and obey his gospel with all the soul, may have this enduring hope, which never maketh ashamed—this blessed hope, even in the hour of death. My brethren, we may all have it. You will all have it, when you have that faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Then will you have strength given you, as your day is. Then will you find grace sufficient for you, sufficient even in a dying hour. Then will you, with the sweet Psalmist of Israel, and with multitudes who have followed him to the bright world of promise and glory, be able to look up to your God and Redeemer, and say, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." AMEN.

### APPENDIX.

#### NOTE A.—PAGE 7.

The precise time when the Congregational Church in Dudley was organized, cannot now be ascertained, as there are extant no records of the church during the ministry of the first pastor. It is probable, however, that it was organized some time in the course of the year 1732, the year in which the town was incorporated. For, as appears from the town records, the inhabitants immediately took measures to procure a religious teacher, and maintain public worship; and in a vote of the town the following year, reference is made to an action of the church, as then existing. Indeed, the preamble to the Act of the General Court, incorporating the town, implies, that the petition for the Act, by the first settlers, was founded on a desire to enjoy the privileges of public worship, and maintain the preaching of the gospel to themselves and their families. The preamble commences thus: "Whereas there are many inhabitants, already settled on a tract of land lying between the towns of Woodstock and Oxford, who, together with others on the south-west part of Oxford, [now Charlton, are very remote from any place of the public worship of God, and are very conveniently situated for a township, and have petitioned," &c.

The first person who received a call to settle in the ministry, in the town, was Mr. Isaac Richardson. And though an ecclesiastical council was called for the purpose, yet, for some reason not stated in the town records, and not now known, the proposed ordination never took place.

The first settled minister, as pastor of the church here, was the Rev. Perley Howe, who was ordained June 12, 1735, and dismissed in 1743. He was from Killingly, Connecticut, and was graduated at Harvard University, 1731.

Rev. Charles Gleason, the second pastor, was ordained October, 1744, and died May, 1790. He was from Brookline, Massachusetts, and was graduated at Harvard University, 1738.

Rev. Joshua Johnson, the third pastor, was installed December, 1790, and dismissed May, 1796. He was from Woodstock, Connecticut, and was graduated at Yale College, 1775.

Rev. Abiel Williams, the fourth pastor, was ordained June 12, 1799, and dismissed March 16, 1831. He was from Raynham, Massachusetts, and was graduated at Brown University, 1795.

Rev. James H. Francis, the fifth pastor, was ordained Aug. 24, 1831, and dismissed June 26, 1837. He was from Weathersfield, Connecticut, and was graduated at Yale College, 1826.

Rev. Walter Follet, the sixth pastor, was installed November 2, 1837, and dismissed September 28, 1841. He was from Williston, Vermont, and was graduated at Middlebury College, 1825.

Rev. Joshua Bates, the seventh and present pastor, was installed March 22, 1843. He was from Cohasset, Massachusetts, and was graduated at Harvard University, 1800.

#### NOTE B.-PAGE 8.

It has been suggested to me, that this statement is calculated to leave a wrong impression concerning the design of alienating the right of property in the meeting-house, in 1833. The design was, as explained to me, not to divert the appropriate use of the house, or deprive the society of the benefit of that use, but simply to raise money to liquidate the debt of the society, (which then amounted to the sum of \$2,000, or more,) in such a manner, as to prevent any such diversion of the house by placing it in the hands of attached members of the society, who were willing to advance money for the purpose, and nominally receive

shares in the house as their security. The design was unquestionably good, as the generosity of the proprietors subsequently showed. But the plan did not work well. It seems to have induced some to withdraw from the society altogether, and to have alienated the affections and weakened the attachment of others. It certainly created a spirit of discouragement, and produced an apprehension of further alienation, in my mind, as soon as I learned the fact, that a deed had been given in 1833, and the transfer of the property confirmed by vote of the society in 1842. But the readiness and noble generosity with which the proprietors relinquished their private rights, and re-deeded their shares in the house to the reorganized society in 1843, removed from my mind the first unfavorable apprehension. Indeed, the whole transaction, in connection with the present financial state of the society, will, I doubt not, exert a favorable influence on its growth and stability. For now any young man in town, as he comes to the age of majority, and any other legal voter who desires to worship God, may, according to the by-laws of the society, become a member by simply signing the constitution, and thus may entitle himself to an interest in the house, and secure to himself the privilege of voting in all the legal transactions of the corporation.

# NOTE C .- PAGE 11.

Uniformly two discourses on the Sabbath, and sometimes three, have been delivered, in this house, by me, or some approved substitute. On two or three Sabbaths, indeed, I have been unwell, and employed some one to read select discourses. With these exceptions, and the failure of a preacher, (whom I had engaged,) to reach the place, on account of a severe storm, not a single Lord's day, during ten years, has failed to bring the preached gospel to the ears of all who chose to come hither and hear. During the whole of this period, likewise, public lectures preparatory to the appointed communion service, once in two months, and sermons on the days appointed for annual Thanksgiving and Fasting, have been preached without a single failure.

Discourses, at most of the funerals which I have been called to attend, and sermons in great numbers at appointed meetings in the several school districts in town, have been preached by me—some written and some extemporaneous, as the circumstances of the occasion and the place seemed to require. A monthly church meeting and a weekly prayer meeting on each Sabbath and Wednesday evening, with very few exceptions, I have constantly attended. To these means of instruction and religious improvement, I may add, occasional family meetings, for the purpose of familiar lectures and expositions of Scripture, have been often held, in connection with pastoral visits and preaching from house to house, "in season and out of season."

One method of religious instruction, which I attempted to use, entirely failed of success-that of giving stated, catechetical lectures to the children of the church. This I was induced to try, because I had found it so pleasant, efficient and successful in my former pastorate, where I furnished every child of suitable age in the parish with a copy of the Assembly's Catechism, or of a more simple manual, with lessons selected from the Scriptures, and met them once a month for recitation and familiar instruction. But the circumstances, there, were entirely different from what they are here. There, most of the inhabitants were of one denomination, and I could collect all the children of the several school districts, and most of their parents, in their respective school houses, as often as the appointment was made. here scattered, as the families belonging to the Congregational Society are, and intermingled as they are with those families, which have no religious sympathy with us, I could not collect a sufficient number of children with their parents, to give interest and efficiency to the exercise. Besides, at that period Sabbath schools had not been introduced into the country, and pious parents more sensibly felt the need of catechetical and pastoral instruction for their children. Perhaps, therefore, I ought not to have expected, under existing circumstances, to succeed. I name the subject, however, because, in other circumstances, I believe judicious pastors may still meet with success, in catechising and lecturing the children of their parishes, and find this method of instruction for the young peculiarly profitable and delightful.

# Note D.—Page 21.

Accordingly, the following communication was made through the Standing Committee of the parish:—

To the Congregational Church and Society in Dudley.

Brethren and Friends,-In accordance with an announcement in my recent anniversary discourse, I now submit to your serious and deliberate consideration, whether it is best, for you and for me, that my present relation to you, as pastor and teacher, should longer continue. I know it cannot continue very long. and it has occurred to me that it might be well for you soon to take some measures to provide for me a colleague or successor. Without dictating, therefore, or even advising, I have thought that I ought to remove all embarrassment from your acting on the subject, as soon as you judge it to be wise and prudent. Accordingly, I leave the subject wholly, under God, in your hands and at your disposal, by assuring you that I am willing you should act upon it now, or when you think best, and that I shall be ready to retire from the office of pastor and responsible teacher of the church and society as soon as you find a successor, and to take a formal dismission, on the day of his ordination. under the sanction of the same ecclesiastical council, which ordains him. Or, if it should be thought best that I should retain, at least in form, the relation of joint pastor with the man whom you shall choose for your future pastor, I shall cheerfully relinquish all legal claim to salary, as soon as his salary begins.

Having made this communication with confidence and frankness, and hoping that you may be wisely directed in whatever course you pursue, I subscribe, as your pastor and friend,

Joshua Bates.

Dudley, March 24, 1853.

N. B. This communication was very kindly received, and a committee of seven was appointed to confer with me on the subject. A conference was accordingly held, and as my health was apparently improving, it was agreed between us, that all further

consideration of the subject should be deferred till the next spring, unless some interposition of Divine Providence should previously call for immediate action.

# NOTE E.-PAGE 28.

This advice I might have enforced by other considerationsby motives of the purest benevolence and the highest conservatism. For a proselyte, drawn over from one name or party to another, by persecution, or bribery, or flattery, or even by undue persuasion and appeals to passion and prejudice, is none the better for the change. Nor will such a convert bring any permanent strength to the cause which he professes to espouse. Indeed, unless a man's heart is changed, when he is induced to change his name and his profession, even though he should embrace the truth in speculation, he is so far from being made better, that he is only hardened in sin and confirmed in iniquity by the hypocritical transaction. Should he hold on to his profession, it will only be holding the truth in unrighteousness. But generally such converts will not hold out; they will prove unstable as water, and soon fall away from the faith and obedience of the gospel. Those, therefore, who go about to make proselytes to their party in religion, subject themselves to the condemnation pronounced by our Saviour against the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees of old: "Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, you make him two-fold more the child of hell, than yourselves."

# NOTE F.-PAGE 29.

This exhortation is applicable to the members of churches in most of the towns of New England. For in every part even of this highly-favored portion of Christendom, there are many persons who do not attend the stated services of the sanctuary. In some places, it is thought, more than one half of the scattered

population deprive themselves of the benefits of public worship and the appointed means of grace. Now, if the gospel is ever to be preached to them, the pastors of the churches in these towns must go forth as missionaries among them, and preach the gospel, as they find opportunity, in school houses and private dwellings. But of what avail will preaching be without prayer; fervent, united prayer? To be successful in these labors of love, the preacher must be attended by the members of his church, and strengthened and encouraged by their counsels and prayers. The time has come, it seems to me, when every pastor of a church in New England, in these United States, indeed, in all Protestant countries, must become a missionary to the heathen around him, and every church must act with its pastor as a missionary church. Let ministers and Christians awake to the serious consideration of this momentous subject, and resolve to unite their efforts in this, their appropriate work.

# Note G.—Page 29.

In this connection I might have alluded to another cause of discouragement and its proper remedy. It is certainly a discouraging fact, that this town is so situated with reference to the places of public worship in the adjoining towns, that several of our good inhabitants, who sympathise with the Congregational church here, and originally acted and worshiped with it, have been induced to change their church relation, and now go out of town to attend public worship. In most of these cases, difference of distance and convenience of travel are alleged as the cause, and in some of them with much plausibility and apparent reasonableness. Still, the advantage of the change is very questionable, when viewed in connection with the many unhappy consequences. For wherever Christians leave a church and society in their own town, and go elsewhere to attend public worship, many evils invariably follow. They thus weaken the hands and discourage the hearts of their Christian brethren whom they leave, especially if they are few in number; and at the same time they add very little moral power to the community

whither they go, where they are comparatively unknown, and where they are often viewed with a jealous eye. They generally lose entirely their proper standing in society, and deprive themselves of the power of acting efficiently in all the social and civil relations of life. Above all, they leave their irreligious neighbors whom they cannot carry out of town with them, to neglect public worship everywhere, and lose all the benefits of religious institutions.

Now, wherever such a state of things exists, and it exists in many places besides Dudley, the proper remedy is to be found in a united effort to bring back all, who can be persuaded to return, by kind treatment and sound reasoning. For too often, I am persuaded, they are kept aloof by neglect or some repellent influence. And from whatever cause they were originally induced to leave their native sheepfold, they will generally return, when they are cordially invited; and when they have fully learned, by experience and observation, the disastrous effects of their scattering abroad; when they perceive that they can do comparatively but little good away from home, where they have but few social relations and civil associations; and especially, when they see that they are losing all influence over their irreligious neighbors, and leaving them, for want of an example in a right direction, to neglect all religious worship and instruction, and thus to sink rapidly into a state of absolute heathenism. No, it cannot be that "good men and true," when they see all this, and when they are kindly invited, will refuse to return, even with some personal sacrifice to their proper place, and unite with their true brethren—their brethren according to the flesh—their incorporate associates, to whom they are bound by all the bonds of social life and civil institutions, in striving to "build the house of the Lord" and promote the salvation of their fellow-men. Yes, except in extreme cases, they will return, rejoicing with one of old, that they "dwell among their own people," and resolving henceforth to worship among their own people, where they are known; where they may have influence; where they can do good, and be happy in doing it; where they were born; where they have always lived; where they expect to die, and be buried with their fathers; and where alone their deaths can be precious, and their memorials blessed!

# TOPOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTICES

OF THE

# TOWN OF DUDLEY, MASS.

DUBLEY, in the County of Worcester and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is a frontier town, bordering on the State of Connecticut. In its present form, and according to its present dimensions, it is bounded on the north by Charlton and Oxford, on the east by Webster, on the south by Thompson and Woodstock, and on the west by Southbridge. It is a small township, not much exceeding five miles in length from east to west, and its average breadth is about three and a half miles. Its superficial contents, therefore, are about seventeen square miles, or a little less than eleven thousand acres. When first incorporated, in the year 1732, its area was much larger, including a small part of what now falls within the limits of Southbridge, and a considerable portion of what now constitutes the township of Webster. The former of these townships, embracing the eastern part of Sturbridge and a contiguous portion of Dudley and Charlton, was incorporated in 1816. The latter, including what had been the eastern portion of Dudley, with the south gore of Oxford, so called, and a part of the township of Oxford itself, received its honored name and corporate powers in the year 1832, just a century from the time of the incorporation of Dudley. And thus was Dudley reduced to its present contracted dimensions.

The centre of this town, in a direct line, is about fifty-five miles from Boston; but, measured according to the route usually

traveled, the distance is sixty miles. Its estimated latitude is 41° 56′ N., and its longitude 71° 54′ W. The surface of the land is somewhat uneven, but the soil is good and not difficult of cultivation, producing naturally the best of timber, principally oak and walnut. The hills, or rather ranges of high lands, running north and south, and nearly parallel with the two principal rivers by which it is watered, are moist, productive and highly favorable to the growing of all kinds of grain, grass and fruit suited to the climate. Indeed, it may be doubted whether a tract of land can be found in New England better adapted to the various purposes of agriculture than that embracing the whole extent of "Dudley Hill," with its slopes and the parallel valleys and ranges of high lands on either side, especially on the west.

The rivers, ponds and rivulets with which Dudley abounds, furnish hydraulic power sufficient for extended manufacturing establishments. The French River received its name from a company of thirty families of Huguenots, who were driven from France by the repeal of the edict of Nantz, and permitted by the proprietors of Oxford, to settle near its banks, where they remained till they were dispersed by the Indians. This river, a steady and never-failing stream, taking its rise in Leicester and passing through Oxford, forms the eastern boundary of Dudley, separating it from Webster and furnishing convenient mill-seats for both towns. The Quinnebaug, one of the most beautiful and productive rivers in New England, runs through the whole breadth of the western part of the town, and furnishes at least two well-marked sites for manufacturing This river rises on the high lands between establishments. Connecticut River and Long Island Sound. Flowing from Marshapaug Pond, in the town of Union, Connecticut, it enters the State of Massachusetts, in Holland, and runs through that town and the southern part of Brimfield, where it receives the waters of two tributary streams from the west and the north. Thence it passes through the towns of Sturbridge, Southbridge and Dudley; and returning to its native State, it unites with the French River in Thompson. And, after pursuing a winding course of seventy or eighty miles, and having given employment and support to thousands, it ultimately, under the time-honored name of "the Thames," which it assumes at Norwich, falls

into Long Island Sound, near New London. Besides the water power furnished to Dudley by these rivers, it possesses the advantage of four or five ponds of considerable extent, with natural or artificial outlets, and convenient locations for mill-seats.

#### HEALTH AND LONGEVITY.

Notwithstanding these numerous collections of water, the inhabitants of the town are peculiarly free from those diseases which often infest regions surrounded by stagnant waters and extensive swamps. There are, indeed, no such waters or swamps here. The undulating surface of the land and the general character of the soil give purity to the water and salubrity to the air, as the former runs through the valleys, and the latter moves over the hills; and thus bring health and longevity to the inhabitants. and render Dudley a desirable place of residence to those who "wish to live long on the earth." An unusual proportion of the inhabitants live to old age. Of the two hundred and seventeen deaths which have taken place in the town during the ten years of my residence here, sixty-three were of persons over fifty years of age; twenty-seven over seventy; eighteen over eighty; and eight between the ages of ninety and a hundred years; and there are still living among us an unusual number of persons who have overleaped, or rather have been carried by, the ordinary bounds of human life-" threescore years and ten."

#### ORIGINAL NAME.

The original name of the town of Dudley, or rather of the tract of country lying between Oxford and Woodstock, and extending from the Quinnebaug River to the great pond now in Webster, and generally called Slater's Pond was, as it is written in some ancient deeds, Shawgunagunkawa, or as in others, Chabanakongkomun, or as printed in Gookin's History of the Indians, Chobonokonomum. This name, with its varied orthography, which was probably pronounced in the broad guttural and flat nasal tones of the Aborigines of the country, seems to have been first given to the pond itself, sometimes even now attempted to be called by the same name, or by the compound and more euphonious name, as printed on Keach's map, Chargoggagogg-Manchoggagogg. As Indian names, as well as those of most

barbarous and uncivilized nations, generally have a significant meaning, and are originally applied to persons and things for specific purposes, I did hope when I began this note, to be able to discover the meaning and appropriateness of the *charming* name of our own town. But having for this purpose consulted all the vocabularies of Indian words within my reach; read "Gookin's account of the Christian Indians," and looked over Eliot's Grammar of the Indian language, with the learned notes and comments of Du Ponceau, Gallatin and Pickering, I am obliged to give up the inquiry without success.

#### PRESENT NAME.

The present name of the town was probably given to it, in the Act of Incorporation, in memory of Thomas Dudley, one of the earliest Governors and most highly respected magistrates of Massachusetts; or of his son, Joseph Dudley, who was also a Governor and Judge in his time; or rather, perhaps, in honor of two of his sons, Paul Dudley, for a time Chief Justice of the province, and Col. William Dudley, his brother, both of Roxbury, where they, and their father and grandfather lived and died. These two gentlemen, in connection with a Col. Fitch, seem to have held by purchase from the original proprietors and by special grant of the General Court, nearly the whole tract of land embraced in the Act of Incorporation, except the Indian reservation. This reservation, containing about four hundred acres, and sometimes denominated in the town records "Pegin's Farm," [probably it should have been written Pegan's, the supposed name of the tribe to which the Dudley Indians belonged, or it may have been the name of the head of a principal family only,] embraced a considerable portion of the south part of "Dudley Hill," the northern boundary line beginning near Newell's Brook, running to the top of the hill, north of the present common, and extending eastward as far as the ridge of Davis's Hill. There is, however, some uncertainty about the bounds of this reserved tract. But whatever may have been its location and extent, it was subsequently sold or exchanged, under the sanction of the government, for a small tract of land near the great pond, which is still occupied by a few degraded descendants of the original proprietors of these fruitful hills and valleys.

#### CHARACTER AND CONDITION OF THE INDIANS.

Of the condition and character of the Aborigines of this region, before the settlement of white men among them, little can now be known. The fullest and most reliable account of them is given by Daniel Gookin, who seems to have been early appointed by the government to superintend the interests, and assist in managing the concerns of "the praying Indians," as those converted by the instrumentality of Eliot and others were usually called. In his "History of the Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians of New England," I find, however, but few allusions to the little tribe or branch of the tribe which dwelt in this region. It appears, indeed, that the labors of Eliot had directly or indirectly reached them before the time of Philip's war, and exposed them to the resentment and incursions of the Indians who took part in that war. Under date of July 2, 1675, Gookin says: "At this time the praying Indians at Marlborough were increased about forty men, besides women and children; which came to pass by the advice of several Christian Indians, that came to them from Hassanamesset, Magunkoag, Manchage, and Chobonokonomum, who (when the troubles increased) left their places and came into Marlborough, under the English wing, and there built a fort." There is no evidence, however, that any of the Dudley Indians apostatized and joined Philip, as several of their Nipmetor Nipmuck neighbors did, either through fear or affection; -some from Wenimesset, [New Braintree,] some from Packachooge, [Worcester and Auburn, and some even from Hassananiesset, or Hassanamisco, [Grafton,] where Eliot had preached, gathered a church, and placed over it as pastor, Joseph Tuckapanawillin. But our predecessors in the occupancy of this region, and who are said by Whitney, in his history of Worcester county, (I know not by what authority,) to be of the Pegan tribe, seem to have remained firm in their attachment to the cause which they had espoused, and probably most of them returned to their former place of residence immediately after King Philip's overthrow, and the cessation of hostilities. I have read Gookin's history carefully, with a view of learning what I could from him, concerning the Pegan tribe, or the branch of it which was found here, when the first

English settlement was made among them. But I have found nothing further worthy of particular notice. The Rev. J. H. Francis, however, in a manuscript sermon which I have seen, has a quotation from Gookin, (he does not state from what work,) of some importance, which I will here transcribe. After some remarks concerning Munchage or Manchage, [Oxford,] he says: "About five miles distant from this place is Chabanakongkomun. It hath its denomination from a very great pond, five or six miles long, that borders on the south of it. This village is fifty-five miles south of Boston; there is in it nine families.\* The people are of a sober deportment, and are better instructed in the worship of God than any of the new praying towns. Their teacher's name is Joseph, who is one of the church of Hassanamesset, a sober, pious and ingenious person, and speaks the English well, and is well read in the Scriptures." From the same manuscript I transcribe the following statement: "In a letter of the celebrated Indian Missionary, Eliot, contained in the historical collections, under date of 1684, Chabanakongkomum is mentioned, as one of the places where the Indians met to worship God and sanctify the Sabbath."

Thus it would seem that the Indians, who had their principal place of habitation within the original limits of this town, early embraced the Christian religion; and from these slight historical notices of them, as well as from various traditional statements made by the aged inhabitants of the town, and especially from the fact stated in the town records, that they subsequently united with their white brethren in building a house for public worship. and attending on the sacred services of the sanctuary, we have good reason for believing that some of them, at least, did come to the knowledge and obedience of the truth, as it is in Jesus. But where are their descendants? Gone-melted away-as have their brethren, "according to the flesh," through the whole of New England; -as, indeed, the Indians in all parts of the American continent are wasting away and disappearing before the swelling and sweeping tide of emigration from the old world; and, as some philosophers and speculative naturalists affirm con-

<sup>\*</sup> Tradition makes the number, at the time of the English settlement here, much larger.

cerning all the inhabitants of the earth, except the Caucasians; that they are all disappearing, and are destined entirely to disappear, before this enterprising and migratory race.

#### SETTLEMENT BY THE ENGLISH.

At what precise period the first white inhabitants commenced their settlement within the limits of Dudley, I have no means of determining. Whitney, in his account of Woodstock, as originally a part of Worcester county, says: "In the year 1686 many of the inhabitants of Roxbury pitched upon a tract of land to settle upon, which was bounded on the south by Woodward and Saffery's line;" that is, the line then recently run by the Commissioners between Connecticut and Massachusetts. Now, as the grant to the Dudleys lay north of Woodstock and that part of Killingly which now constitutes Thompson, it is probable that the settlement was made soon after, in the south part of Dudley, by these persons, or other emigrants from Roxbury. It is known, indeed, that families by the name of Newell and Edmunds from Roxbury, and others by the name of Healy from Newton, were some of the first who took up their abode among the Indians of this region. It has been conjectured that the settlement on lands now in Dudley must have been commenced as early as 1720, and yet it is admitted that no deeds, conveying a right to these lands from the original grantees, are found of an earlier date than 1725. Nor do I find in the town records any mention of births or deaths before this period, though these records run back seven years before the time of the incorporation of the township. The first recorded birth is that of Obadiah, son of Joseph and Mehitable Sabin, January 14, 1725, and the second, that of Mehitable, daughter of Joseph and Mehitable Putney, two days later. But these children, it is said, were probably born before their parents removed to this region; because there is a tradition well sustained and generally believed, that Abigail, daughter of James Corbin, was the first white person born within the limits of this town, and that Joseph, son of Joshua Healy, was the first male child born here.

#### INCORPORATION AND ORGANIZATION.

But at whatever period the settlement was commenced, the settlers had become sufficiently numerous in 1732 to induce

them to petition "the Great and General Court," for the corporate powers of a town, and to justify the government in making the grant. The act of incorporation bears the date of June 1, 1732. The order of the House of Representatives for the first town meeting was issued to Joseph Edmunds, empowering him to call such a meeting, and directing him to notify "the principal inhabitants" to assemble for the purpose of organizing themselves into civil society, as a township, and choosing the appropriate officers. Accordingly the first town meeting was held at the dwelling-house of William Carter, on the 20th of June, 1732, when Joseph Edmunds was chosen Moderator; and the following persons appointed officers of the town for the ensuing year, viz: Joseph Edmunds, first Selectman; James Corbin, the second: Ebenezer Edmunds, the third; George Robinson, the fourth; and John Lillie, the fifth, and also the Town Clerk. For the sake of convenient reference, I subjoin the names of those persons who have held the offices of Town Clerk and Chairman of the Selectmen from the time of this organization to the present period; with the number of the years which each one served:

# TOWN CLERKS, IN THEIR ORDER.

John Lillie,	3	years.	Amasa Nichols,	2	years.
Jonathan Newell, .	2	66	Rufus Davis,	6	66
Benjamin Conant, .	26	66	William Hancock, .	12	66
Ezra Conant	6	66	Morris Larned,	7	6.6
Jedediah Marey, .	1	66	Abiel Williams,		
Edward Davis,			Baylies Knapp,		
John E. Eaton,			Elisha Williams, .		
John Chamberlain.	17	66	Augustus T. Allen,	2	66
Aaron Tufts,			Lemuel Healy,		

#### CHAIRMEN OF SELECTMEN.

Joseph Edmunds, .		7	years.	Aaron Tufts,	15	vears.
George Robinson, .				Thomas Larned,		
Ebenezer Edmunds,				Jepthah Bacon,	5	66
John Vinton,					5	66
Benjamin Conant, .		13	66	William Winsor,	1	6.6
John Lillie,		1	66	John Brown,	5	66
Joseph Upham,	٠	5	"	John Eddy,	6	66
Joseph Sabin,				William Hancock,		66
Phinehas Mixer, .		6	66	Joel Barnes,	1	66
Ebenezer Bacon, .		2	66	George A. Tufts,	1	66
Jedediah Marey, .		11	"	Chester Clemans,		
William Larned, .		3	66	Baylies Knapp,	1	66
Edward Davis,		3	66	Theodore Leonard,	1	66
Jonathan Day,		2	66	Asa E. Edmunds,		
John Warren,		3	66	Moses Barnes,	2	66
Isaac Lee,		1	66	Reuben Davis,	1	66
John Chamberlain, .		5	66			

# POPULATION AND PATRONYMICS.

The precise number of the inhabitants of the town, when first incorporated, cannot now be ascertained, nor even all the family names known. In order to aid those who wish to pursue this inquiry, and learn at what period their ancestors took up their abode here, however, I add the following marked

#### CATALOGUE

Of Family Names of persons, now resident in the town of Dudley, viz :-

Of Laneing L	vames of persons, now	resident in the total	u of Dualey, viz:-
†Adams	‡Child	Green	*Marsh
Albee	†Chamberlain	Grimley	May
Aldrich	Chickering	J	Maynard
Allard	Church	Hall	McCracking
*Allen	*Clark	*Hancock	McDermott
Amidon	Clemans	Harding	McLoud
Angel	Cogswell	Harwood	McQuaid
Anis	Conant	*Haven	McKenner
Arnold	†Corbin	*Haskell	‡Mixer
	Copeland	Hersey	Mory
†Bacon	Corbett	Hickey	Morton
Bary	Crow	†Healy	Moran
‡Bailey	Cowie	Holbrook	Morse
‡Baker	‡Cortiss	Hooton	Moffitt
*Ballard	‡Curtis	Howard	‡Morris
*Barnes	7 C 41 013	Humphrey	+1/101115
*Barton	†Davis	Hutchinson	†Newell
‡Bates	Davison	11 accimison	*Nichols
Bray	Day	Jacobs	Nye
Beaumont	Dixon	‡Jewett	1130
Bemis	Dornal	‡Jewell	Owen
Bertody	Doyle	*Johnson	Owen
Bixby	‡Dodge	Jones	Pain
*Blood	Dugan	Jourdan	Parmenter
*Brown	Durfee	outuan	Perkins
Browning	Dwight	Keich	*Perry
Bosworth	Dwyer	Keiton	Petrce
Brogan	D. i yel	Keith	Pike
Bracket	*Eddy	Kenny	Pierce
Brodben	†Edmunds	Кент	Pickering
Bottum	Edwards	Keyes	Pope
Burnett	‡Elwell	Kingsbury	Powers
Buss	721111011	King	Plowffe
Buckley	Farley	Knight	*Pratt
Butler	Farroll	221118111	Prince
Bauti	Fitts	Lapham	Prout
*Cady	Flynn	*Larned	Prichard
Cary	Fortune	Leavens	THEIMIU
Callery	*Foster	Lindley	Quid
Callahan	1 03001	Lindsey	Quiu
Campbell	Gary	Love	Rawson
Carney	Gillmore	Lyon	
*Carpenter	Goodell	279 011	Regan Reynolds
Chanley		Mansfield	Richards
†Cheney	Goodspeed ‡Gore	†Marcy	Robbins
+ Oneney	+0016	+Marcy	TOODINS

†Robinson	Searles	Thayer	†Wakefield
Rogers	Smith	Thornton	Walker
Rogin	Simmons	Thompson	*Waldron
Ryan	Soal	Tourtellott	Watson
·	Steere	Town *	*Webster
†Sabin	‡Stone	Tupperdy	Welch
*Sayles	‡Stevens	Twist	Wilder
Scholefield	Sullivan		*Williams
Shanley	Sumner	‡Upham	Winship
Shelly		_	Wheelock
Slingsby	*Taft	Vickus	Whiting
Sly	‡Taylor	‡Vinton	*Wood

Of these two hundred and seven family names, twelve only are found in the town records attached to those persons who took an active part in the organization of its government, under the act of incorporation, or in the management of its affairs during the first two years. These are distinguished in the catalogue by this mark, †.

Twenty-one other names in the catalogue, marked thus, ‡, are found in the town records before the year 1750.

Twenty-six others appear in the records before the close of the eighteenth century. These are distinguished in the catalogue by a star, thus, \*.

The other names in the catalogue, not marked, are of persons who seem to have become inhabitants at different periods, since 1801. Besides these, many names appear on the records of the town, and some of persons distinguished in their respective generations, who are gone; having either been cut off by the divisions of the township, or removed to other places, or died without male descendants to inherit and perpetuate their names. Those names on the catalogue which are borne by the largest number of the present generation, are the following, in the order of their extent: Upham, Vinton, Healy, Larned and Corbin.

## OCCUPATION AND PURSUITS.

For many years after the first settlement of the place, the occupation and pursuits of the inhabitants were almost exclusively agricultural; and the population seems to have increased with great rapidity, indicating what I have already stated concerning the adaptation of the soil to agricultural purposes, and the favorableness of the region to health and longevity. A large number of families came from several towns north of Boston

and near Salem, about the year 1750. Again there was a large increase of inhabitants about the commencement of the war of the Revolution; some from the south of Boston, some from the State of Rhode Island, and not a few from towns in the immediate vicinity. Accordingly I find that as early as 1790, when the first census of the United States was taken, the town contained a population of 1,114. The next census of 1800 gave 1,140; the next, 1810, 1,226; the next, 1820, 1,615; the next, 1830, 2,155; the next, 1840, (Webster excluded,) 1,352; and the last, of 1850, 1,446.

From this abstract from the United States census, it would seem, that the agricultural population of the town soon rose to its maximum, and that the increase since 1810 has probably been made in connection with the introduction and progress of manufactures; and that this progress has been uninterrupted, except when the principal manufacturing district was taken off, to constitute the town of Webster, between the fifth and sixth census. Nor can there be much doubt, that this progress will continue. For the same conveniences of location, productiveness of soil, consequent low price of board, and facilities of intercourse with the two great marts of trade, New York and Boston, which have recently introduced and are rapidly extending manufactures in leather among us, must give encouragement to the introduction of other kinds of handicraft labor. Besides, the manufactures of wool and cotton, flax and hemp, depending on hydraulic power, already commenced with success, may be extended almost indefinitely. A considerable additional use may be made of the waters of the French River, on the Eastern border of the town. Of the waters of the Quinnebaug, no use is made for manufacturing purposes, at present, within the limits of Dudley; though it passes through the whole breadth of the town, and furnishes two well-marked sites for extensive manufacturing establishments. Of the united waters from Gore and Baker Ponds, good use is, indeed, made at Tufts-factory-village, as well as of those running from Hayden and Peter Ponds, at Marino village. But at each of these places the works might be greatly extended and the operations profitably increased. In my apprehension, however, the hydraulic power, of the highest importance to the prosperity of the town, is yet to be developed, brought into use

and made to operate near the center both of the population and the territory. Whenever the unused and nearly useless rights on the natural outlet of Warren Pond shall be extinguished, and its waters diverted, by a deep canal, into the valley between "Dudley Hill" and Leavens or Eddy Hill, in connection with Healy's or "Newell's Brook," they will furnish a steady power, which may be used three or four times over, and easily applied to a succession of manufacturing establishments. This theory is founded on the assumption, that the pond is fed by large and inexhaustible springs; and the assumption is supported by analogy and the known facts, that the pond is deep and surrounded by high and well-watered hills.

# CHARACTER OF THE INHABITANTS.

As to the character of the inhabitants of Dudley, much need not be said, as it does not differ essentially from that, which is exhibited by the inhabitants of most of the towns in the vicinity. No particular traits of character seem, indeed, to have distinguished the first white settlers here, or those who immigrated to the place and associated with them, before the commencement They were chiefly of English of the nineteenth century. origin, descendants of the Pilgrims. They came generally from Roxbury and Newton, or from the region about Salem; and they partook largely of the staid character of those, who constituted the first colonists of Massachusetts. They were industrious, enterprising, well agreed in their political views, social sympathies, moral habits and religious usages. Of course, in their early proceedings, as a corporation under the laws of the colony, they were generally harmonious. In regulating the civil and social interests of the community and exercising the functions of self-government, no important difference of opinion or alienation of feeling, seems to have arisen among them for many years after the incorporation of the township. thought alike, and acted together for their mutual benefit and the general good. This harmony of sentiment and union of action, which appears in all the early records of the town, is made peculiarly evident to those who read that portion of these records, which relates to the Revolutionary war. In the pursuit of civil liberty and national independence, all were united.

Not an opposing vote was passed, nor a dissenting voice raised, in town-meeting, during the whole period of that self-denying struggle, and amid all the privations, which the times and the unequal contest imposed upon the country. They were willing to stand in their lot and bear their full proportion of the burden. Every call for men and money, to carry forward the work of the Revolution, was met with apparent cheerfulness, and answered with promptitude and a self-sacrificing spirit. Indeed, some of these proceedings seem to have indicated a firmness of spirit and energy of purpose, which nothing could subdue; and to have been adopted with a readiness and determination, to go forward at all hazards, as if the whole business and burden of the Revolutionary war depended on the counsels and action of these primary assemblies of the people. The Declaration of Independence, made in Congress on the 4th of July, 1776, was no sooner presented in town-meeting, than it was adopted, and placed on the records of the town, as if it had originated with them and required their direct sanction-as if Jefferson had reported it to the meeting, and Adams had stood before them, and defended it with his manly eloquence.

One of the most conclusive proofs of their patriotism and patient submission to personal privations for the public good, is a sumptuary regulation, reported by a large Committee of the town, in accordance with an Act of the General Court, and unanimously adopted in town-meeting, by which the price of labor, produce, food and raiment, entertainment for man and beast, and even of the favorite beverage of the times, was definitely fixed, and made an indispensable rule of action, like the laws of the Medes and Persians. Whoever, therefore, wishes to know how the mighty and unequal struggle was successfully carried on against the consolidated power of the British empire, by these American colonies, must direct his inquiries to first principles and particular facts, like these,must search the early records of this and other towns, and observe the union and energy of their proceedings and the selfsacrificing and patriotic spirit which moved them. Yes; and he may thus learn, that it was the action of these primary assemblies of the people, as De Tocqueville has well said, that planted the germ of the American Revolution, and nourished to maturity the tree of American liberty and independence.

#### ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS.

The ecclesiastical history of the town may be given in a few words. The first settlers seem to have commenced their social religious action with wisdom and good counsel. As soon as they obtained an act of incorporation and began to exist as a civil society, they took measures to become an ecclesiastical society. They made provision, without unnecessary delay, to build a suitable house for public worship and secure the labors of a religious teacher and stated preacher of the gospel. On the 30th of January, 1734, it was determined by vote in townmeeting, to erect the proposed meeting-house, on "Joshua Pegin's old field," provided the land could be procured for that purpose; and on the 27th day of the following March, it was voted, to accept four acres for this and other public purposes, presented by the original Indian proprietors, on the top of "Dudley Hill;" and to perform the conditions, viz: "to allow the Indians a convenient seat or seats in our meeting-house, when it is up." Accordingly the frame of the house was raised on the 23d of October, 1734; and the building erected near the spot, where the Congregational meeting-house now stands. To aid them in this expensive undertaking, they applied for assistance to the Messrs. Dudley; and received a donation of £100 and a lot of 100 acres of land, as a parsonage or settlement for the first minister. They also applied to the General Court, and obtained an act, authorizing the taxing of non-residents as well as the inhabitants of the town for the support of public worship and religious instruction. And as far as appears from the records, no objection was made, for several years, against this equal contribution for the purpose, by direct taxation on polls and property, as in all other cases and for all other legal purposes.\* But this happy union, in process of time, was disturbed

<sup>\*</sup> Probably the complaint, which soon arose among the minor sects of Christianity, against the provincial law and the provisions of the Constitution of 1780, for the support of public worship and religious instruction, never would have existed, nor the alteration been subsequently made, if that provision had been really equal—if it had imposed no burden on minor sects, in procuring certificates, &c. If the distribution had been made according to denominational entries, made in the assessors' books, at the time of taking the valuation, one temptation to withdraw from all public worship and religious instruction would have been avoided, and this salutary provision, like that for the support of public schools, might have been retained to this day, in the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

by causes which might be traced back to their origin and followed down to their present unhappy results. As such an investigation and development, however, would not aid us in furnishing a remedy for existing evils, that part of the history may be here omitted. I will only repeat, therefore, the observation already made, in substance, that there was but one ecclesiastical body or organized religious society in that portion of the town, which now constitutes Dudley, till the year 1792. Previously to this period, there were indeed a few individuals, who claimed to belong to particular denominations, among whom were a few Baptists in the East part of the town, who finally formed a distinct ecclesiastical society in what now constitutes Webster. Before their organization, however, instead of drawing their portion of the taxes for the support of public worship by certificates according to law, they were exempted by vote of the town from taxation, or their taxes were annually abated. This practice, thus holding out a temptation to the penurious to deprive themselves and their children of the means of religious instruction and the benefits of public worship, seems to have continued, increasing the evil from year to year; till at a townmeeting on the 7th of May, 1792, the following sweeping and desolating vote was passed by a majority of 13 out of 89: "That all denominations of Christians, except the standing order, so called, be exempted from ministerial taxation." This vote, though illegal, seems to have been the natural result of the unequal provision for distribution, in the Constitution of 1780, and to have been passed, however injudiciously, in a spirit of liberality. One of the consequences, (and it seems to have been rendered necessary,) was an immediate distinct organization of a Congregational society, in connection with the already-existing Congregational church. The society thus organized, erected their present meeting-house, nearly on the site of the old one belonging originally to the whole town, in the year 1824. Not far from this time a Methodist Episcopal society was formed in the East part of the town, [now Webster.] But some disagreement concerning the location of their meeting-house induced that portion of the society, who lived within the present limits of Dudley, to withdraw, and unite with Universalists in building what they denominated the Union meeting-house.

union, however, did not last long. The Methodist portion of the association, after a few years, withdrew, and finally built a third meeting-house, on "Dudley Hill." Hence we have three places of public worship, in this little village, the center of a small township; where one would have been sufficient to accommodate all, who now habitually attend public worship, if they were as harmonious as were the first settlers in town, or sufficiently agreed in sentiment and harmonious in feeling to worship together.

#### SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION.

Our Schools and provisions for education are in a much better condition than our ecclesiastical relations and organizations. According to the records of the town, however, it is apparent that there was a delay in making proper provision for the education of the rising generation. Seven years elapsed, after the incorporation of the township, before any public money was raised for the purpose of supporting public schools, or any such school kept in town. The cause of this delay, in violation of the provincial laws, does not appear; and when, in the year 1739, provision was first made according to law for the purpose, and for many years after, there seems to have been considerable difficulty in forming school districts and making a satisfactory distribution of the money raised. Indeed, this subject all along, till very recently, appears to have caused much dissatisfaction. The present arrangement of districts and the present mode of distribution, however, it is understood, give general satisfaction; and will, it is hoped, after fair experiment, satisfy all. In addition to the benefits of well arranged and well supported schools in all parts of the town, our youth may enjoy, at a trifling expense, the advantages of an Academy founded by Amasa Nichols, Esq., and bearing his name, incorporated in the year 1819, and endowed by the Legislature of the State with half a township of land in Maine-an endowment sufficient to give it a permanent existence. We have, too, a model school-house in the center district with a hall well fitted for scientific lectures. Nothing seems to be wanting, therefore, to enable the children and youth of this town to obtain an education qualifying them for all business purposes and the common pursuits of life, except

a well selected town library, under such regulations that all may find access to it and be attracted by it.

#### PRESENT SOCIAL STATE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.

I close these notices with a remark on the present social state and future prospects of the town. Notwithstanding the unhappy divisions which have arisen among us, on the subject of ecclesiastical relations and organizations, in connection with an increasing diversity of political opinions-notwithstanding this unhappiness and the frequent changes of the manufacturing portion of our population, which naturally enhances the evil; still there is a good degree of order and social comity prevailing among the great mass of the inhabitants of the town. This is owing, no doubt, in a measure to the influence of the correct principles and harmonious action of the early settlers, and to the feelings and habits which their conservative example has continued to foster and maintain from generation to generation. But more of this quietness, order, and even kindness and courtesy of social intercourse, I am inclined to think, is to be ascribed to the assimilating and elevating power of education. Not only have the children of successive generations here been educated together, and very much alike, in our public schools; but for more than thirty years an academy has been maintained in our village, always under the superintendence and instruction of some liberally educated gentleman. Of course the youth of the town, both male and female, have had opportunity, and most of them have improved the privilege, of obtaining a good academic education; thus enlarging their views and elevating their characters; qualifying themselves to become teachers of common schools, and to exercise the various functions of society with propriety and success. I may add here that this school, on account of its favorable location, is unquestionably destined to exert a still higher and more extended influence on the inhabitants of this town and the surrounding community.

But whatever may have been the cause, or the combination of causes which has exerted so conservative an influence on the social character of Dudley, amid the unfavorable influences of religious and political divisions, the fact is obvious that Dudley village is a place of great quietness, order and temperance; and

that peace and an exemption from degrading vices prevail among the great body of the inhabitants in almost every neighborhood within the limits of the town, rendering it, and especially the village, a desirable place of residence for those who love quietude, and wish to educate their children as far removed as possible from scenes of confusion and corrupting influences.

How long this state of things will continue, we presume not to predict. For recently a new element of society has been thrown into our community, by the rapidly increasing immigration of foreigners-a people of a distinct character-of views, habits and manners altogether different from those of the former inhabitants of the place. What is to be the result of this influx of a new race upon the character of the old mass of the population, no one can tell. Whether this new element of society will ultimately be absorbed by the old mass, and the character of the mixed population become assimilated, so as to live together in peace and act harmoniously, or whether the new element will continue to act as a repulsive force, preventing all confiding intercourse, creating impassable social barriers, and forming grades and castes in society as fixed as those of Hindostan, is a problem which can be solved by nothing but time and experiment. It is a problem, however, which must be solved, not only in this town, but in all parts of our country. Something of the evils of the unnatural mixture of these different races we must for a time experience. We see, indeed, that it is lowering the standard of morals, diminishing the influence of religious sentiment, increasing the number of those who desecrate the Sabbath, and by raising up a generation without education, self-respect, and a spirit of independence, endangering our free institutions and liberties, both civil and ecclesiastical. Let us, however, hope for the best; and let the friends of liberty, knowledge, religion and human happiness, do what they can to prevent this downward tendency, this approximation to barbarism, this danger of social alienation civil discord, anarchy and despotism. Let them strive to harmonize the discordant elements of society, promote the cause of civilization, and secure the welfare of the generations yet to come!







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